



**For Immediate Release  
April 28, 2006**

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**DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION ANNOUNCES THE  
AVAILABILITY OF APPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTEER  
FIRE ASSISTANCE GRANTS**

Environmental Affairs Secretary Stephen R. Pritchard and Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington today announced the availability of applications for this year's Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grants.

The grants are available to non-profit rural call or volunteer fire departments that primarily serve a community or city with a population of less than 10,000. The fire department must be made up of at least eighty percent call or volunteer firefighters and be recognized as a department under state law.

"We are pleased to once again make these funds available to rural call or volunteer fire departments that provide an invaluable service to their respective communities," said Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington. "This year's program will provide funding for firefighter safety, rural fire defense and technology transfer."

A total of \$86,551 is available through this grant program, which is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and administered by DCR. Successful applicants bear the full cost of the project up to \$4,000, then apply for reimbursement of up to one half of that cost. Total reimbursement shall not exceed \$2,000. Funds are to be dispersed through the Cooperative Fire Protection (\$52,941) and the National Fire Plan's "Communities at Risk" monies (\$33,610).

Communities may apply for either or both the Cooperative Fire Protection (CFP) and the National Fire Plan's (NFP) funds at this time. Applications for this year's VFA grant program have been mailed to Forest Wardens in qualifying towns. If your town qualifies for this funding and you have not received an application, contact DCR's Acting Chief of Forest Fire Control and Forestry Jim DiMaio at 617-626-1430.

Completed applications are due back to DCR Forest Fire Control Program Coordinator Roxanne B. Savoie, Hampton Ponds State Park, 1048 North Road/Route 202, Westfield, MA 01085 by May 26, 2006.

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